

**REMARKS**

Claims 26–50 remain in the application.

In the Final Office Action dated July 9, 2008 on this application, claims 49 and 50 were allowed, claims 34, 42, 43 and 45-48 were objected to and claims 26-33, 35-41 and 44 were rejected variously on the basis of Sections 102(b) and 103(a) in view of Borne (4,802,725).

Applicant has amended the claims to more clearly define the claim elements and more clearly distinguished from the art that has been cited. Applicant has also made some additions to the specification to clarify some of the references to the complementary optical terminal element which is referred to, though not shown, in the application, as well as to identify the sleeve portions as including a channel and a channel extension. Applicant has also deleted the language “in particular for establishing multimedia connections in a vehicle” from claim 26 and the similar language referencing “manufacturing” from claim 49 which were originally included to identify exemplary applications of the invention.

The opto-electronic connection device of Borne has an upper side for connection to terminals 5 of optical fibers 4 (corresponding to the complementary optical terminal element, referenced but not shown in the current application) and a lower end to be connected to a circuit board by connection leads 6 (corresponding to the bottom 22 in Fig. 1 of the current application which is the connection side to a circuit board).

A main difference between Borne and the instant invention is that Borne has the complementary optical terminals 5 directly touching the opto-electronic components 3 in the connector housing, as shown in Figs. 2 and 3, to establish the desired connection between the complementary mating connector (4,5) and the optical connector (modular unit 1). In Borne, the mating receptacle formed by channels 16A, 16B, 16C, 15A, 15B, 15C, 11A, 11B and 11C directly leads to the connection surface of the opto-electronic components 3, whereas with the instant invention, the mating receptacle formed by the cavities 8 and 35 is limited by the respective surfaces 82 of the fiber sections 72, 74. These fiber sections 72, 74 are neither shown nor suggested by Borne. While the channels 11A, 11B and 11C in Borne are empty when the complementary optical terminal 5 is not mated in the optical connector 1A, 1B and 1C, the corresponding channels 34 and 37 of the instant invention are filled with the optical fiber


sections 72 and 74 independent of whether or not the complementary optical terminal has been mated.

Amended claim 26 requires a connector housing including a mating receptacle that has at least one sleeve forming a channel and a channel extension adjacent to each other along a stop surface (38,39) for receipt of the complementary optical terminal element. The channel extension has clamping elements which define a narrowing opening in the channel extension longitudinally spaced from the stop surface and at least one optical fiber section which is affixed in the channel extension. The front end of the optical fiber section extends beyond the narrowing opening in the channel extension. This structure is neither shown nor suggested by the art cited in this application. For the foregoing reasons, in addition to the arguments set forth in the Amendment dated March 24, 2008 for this case, claim 26, as amended, along with its dependent claims 27-48 are believed allowable. Additionally, claim 49, which was previously allowed, has also been amended to provide consistent terminology with claims 26-48 and is believed still allowable along with its dependent claim 50.

A Request for Continued Examination is concurrently submitted herewith. The USPTO is authorized to charge any fee that is due in this matter to Deposit Account 50-1873.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conversation would facilitate the prosecution of the above-identified application, the Examiner is invited to call applicant's attorney.

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